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## A NEW STATEMENT OF THE LAW OF POPULATION.

NO doctrine or class of doctrines in political economy has been criticised more severely or opposed more vigorously than what passes current as the law of population. This law is so intimately associated with the name of Malthus that it has become synonymous in the minds of most people with the term Malthusianism. An examination of the various current statements of the law as developed by Malthus in the various editions of his *Essay on Population*, amply justifies many of the criticisms made upon it. At the same time it reveals a singular lack of agreement on the part of so-called Malthusians as to the real basis of the law and as to the proof by which it is to be substantiated. Instead of a single law of population, determined by certain invariable conditions which are universally recognized, it is found that the statement of the law has repeatedly shifted its ground so as to give practically several laws of population; and at the same time the character of the proof advanced has changed to keep pace with the new formulations of the law. So unsatisfactory have many of the stock arguments proved, that nothing short of a restatement, in modified form, of the conditions under which the law is assumed to operate will serve to bring it into harmony with the present tendencies of economic thought. There are several distinct doctrines which lie confused in the discussion of the theory of population, each of which must have its consequences logically developed before the difficulties which now attend the discussion of the law can be cleared away.

The first proof advanced by Malthus depended upon the opposition between population and the food supply. On the one hand, the tendencies to populate being regarded as fixed and definite, there is a rapid increase in the number of the population which brings the members of the human race into

conflict with one another in their struggle for subsistence. On the other hand the food supply is regarded as limited. Under the influence of the tendency to over-populate, the race is constantly pressing upon the limits set by the production of food, and is always in imminent danger of being reduced to starvation. Such a formulation of the law of population has the great merit of being clear and easily comprehended. Unfortunately the proof of the law so formulated is by no means convincing or even logical ; and it is the weak character of the evidence adduced in support of the law that has strengthened its opponents in their opposition.

In the first edition of Malthus's work we see clearly the starting point of this discussion ; it is plain that the law was formulated as a result of meditation upon the opposition between population and food supply. Godwin, in his *Political Justice*, had advanced the same doctrine found in Condorcet's *Sketch of the Progress of the Human Mind*, in which is predicted the removal of all social and political evils, and the establishment of peace, virtue and happiness over the whole earth. Godwin attributed nearly all the vices and misery with which society is afflicted to bad government and bad laws. Reform these, he said ; do away with all the institutions that minister to oppression, both political and social : and society will naturally mould itself to an ideal state, where the spirit of benevolence, guided by justice, will distribute the bounteous fruits of the earth among all persons according to their several needs. It was such an ideal as this that Malthus wished to combat, and he sought to do it by calling attention to the opposition between the food supply and population, the desire for food and the desire for marriage being treated as two coördinate principles. His method of proof was as follows. In an ideal state the food supply of the whole world would soon be brought into requisition and there would be no possible chance for any further increase ; but the condition of the people would cause population to increase more rapidly than it does now, and in this way there would soon be a greater population than the food supply could sustain. Consequently he predicted that at the end of a short

period, perhaps not more than fifty years, the ideal society would be destroyed through over-population. It should be noticed that this argument has nothing to do with the actual condition of society, past or present. It merely relates to an ideal society ; and it must be confessed that this argument against Godwin is complete.

If we substitute for the scheme of Godwin the ideal of society more familiar to us in the present day, the vital point of the controversy can be more clearly seen. Bellamy in his *Looking Backward* has presented to us a scheme of an ideal society in which the present evils, political as well as economic, are avoided, and the highest form of social organization possible for us with our physical limitations is realized. While this scheme differs in many respects from that of Godwin, the points which the two have in common are numerous, and the arguments of Malthus are as pertinent to the one as to the other. Bellamy's scheme would also bring into requisition all the means of subsistence, and the argument of Malthus would have the same force here as against Godwin. In other words, Bellamy provides no means by which to care for any future increase in population after his ideal society has once established itself and all resources are fully utilized.

However cogent the arguments of Malthus may be against such schemes, it is unfortunate that the problem of the physical powers of the earth became confused with the problem of population. The question is not population *versus* the possible means of subsistence, but population *versus* the power in a given society to obtain subsistence. In other words the opposition is between population and its productive power. Useless and confusing also is the discussion of the natural rate of increase and the means by which this natural rate can be measured. The strength of the sexual passion is not a necessary premise in the discussion of the problem, though Malthus thought differently. Malthus was equally unfortunate when he endeavored to demonstrate the natural inequality between the productive powers of nature and of the human species, thus apparently making Providence responsible for the evils result-

ing from over-population. It is only too evident that when Malthus wrote his first essay he was influenced more by political than by economic considerations, or he would not have contended for the natural inequality of men. Godwin sought to make society responsible for all the evils from which we suffer. This is doubtless an exaggerated view ; yet the doctrine of Malthus that all our misery results from natural causes is equally far from the truth.

Before the publication of the second edition of his *Essay*, Malthus had subjected it to a careful revision and had added to it the results of foreign travel and wider reading. The change in the title itself indicated the changed character of the book and the new centre about which the discussion was now to revolve. The first edition was *An Essay on the Principle of Population as it affects the Future Improvement of Society*, thus relating directly to the ideal society which Godwin had in mind; the second edition is *An Essay on the Principle of Population, or a View of its Past and Present Effects on Human Happiness*. The future is no longer prominent; the past and present now come into the foreground. Malthus endeavors to show how in past ages and at the present time the misery and suffering in the world come, not from social and political oppression, but from the tendency to over-populate. The second argument introduced by Malthus depends upon the relative increase of population and of the food supply. Neither population nor the food supply is at its ultimate limit, but the ratio of increase is greater in the one case than in the other : while the food supply is increased by a given increment, population is increased to a still greater degree. Under such conditions, even though the whole food supply of the world is not utilized, there can be no other result than misery and suffering. The opposition now is between the physical qualities of the soil and the physiological qualities of men. The physiological qualities of men lead to a geometrical ratio of increase in population, while the physical qualities of the soil do not allow more than an arithmetical ratio of increase in the supply of food. The force of this argument is to emphasize Malthus's thesis that

present misery results from the tendency to over-populate. Population is constantly pressing against the means of subsistence, and no relief is possible which does not operate on and through the minds and habits of the people.

There is little justification for John Stuart Mill's attempt, more charitable than wise, to excuse in Malthus what he considered "an unlucky attempt to give numerical precision to things which do not admit of it,"—an attempt which was "wholly superfluous to his argument." As a matter of fact this particular argument was the only one that Malthus could at this time bring forward as a basis for his theory. With these definite ratios he was able to establish with respect to the present and past of human society conclusions identical with those concerning the future which he had arrived at by his first argument. Mill probably forgot that economic thought in the time of Malthus had not yet arrived at the formulation of the law of diminishing returns, which was later to modify in more ways than one the current economic doctrines.

It is at this stage of the discussion that a new argument was introduced which gave to the law a broader basis. This third argument depends upon the law of diminishing returns and is a result of the agitation concerning the ground leases of England, becoming prominent about 1815, when Malthus, West and Ricardo began to develop almost simultaneously the theory of rent. When this agitation had brought about its inevitable consequences, there was seen to be an opportunity for a stronger statement of the law of population than had been possible when the whole argument depended upon the difference between arithmetical and geometrical ratios. This new statement is put more clearly by Mill than by any other writer. The food supply has not definite limits, as would be the case in an ideal society; it is rather to be thought of as a quantity gradually increasing, but against a steadily increasing pressure. The obstacles to the increase in the food supply are not definite and fixed, but are likened by Mill to an elastic band, which stretches, but with increased difficulty, to meet the demands of the increasing population.

Like its predecessors, this last argument is conclusive only under given conditions. While the concept of society was merely a static one, a clear case could be made by the economists in favor of the law of population as formulated by Mill. But this argument fails if society is dynamic and the average return which the population obtains for its industry is increasing. The opponents of the theory of population have been able to turn the point of Mill's arguments by showing that the average condition of humanity at present is at least no worse, and in all probability is much better, than in the past. It is claimed that we are passing not from good to bad opportunities for labor, but from poorer to better. Under such conditions the law of diminishing returns would not be operative, and consequently the conclusions which Mill draws as to the evil effects of the increase in population upon the past and present conditions of society would not be true. In a dynamic state of society there would be no pressure of population upon the limits of the food supply for an indefinite period. So long as there is any uncertainty as to whether society is in a static or a dynamic condition, Mill's law of population is open to attack, and it is not difficult to show the weakness of his whole argument concerning the effects of an increasing population.

There is a fourth statement of the law of population which is even more extreme than the three we have thus far considered. This is traceable to the discussion relating to the wage-fund. According to this theory the formula "population depends upon food" is narrowed into "population depends upon capital." Industry is limited by capital and not by natural forces. Man and nature cannot create prosperity without the aid of the capitalist as an intermediary. Food is no longer looked upon as the gift of nature to man, but as the gift of one man to another. In order to procure food there must be not only nature to produce it, but man to save it. The growth of population is limited by the rate of increase of capital, and not by the natural rate of increase of food. The powers of nature to increase food cannot be fully exercised, because of the lack of the "saving" quality in men. As the mass of the laborers

lack this quality, their rate of increase depends not on themselves or on nature, but on the quantity of food which an outside class is willing to refrain from consuming. It is this concept of the law of population that has estranged the laboring classes from political economy and has given to recent socialistic literature a basis for its reaction from the old political economy.

Each of the four statements of the law of population which we have thus far examined can easily be shown to be defective. If political economy is to continue to make any use of the law of population, it is clear that this law must be re-stated in a manner more in harmony with the present tendencies of economic thought. The law must be given a new basis upon facts which are not open to dispute and which do not bring up in the mind of the reader the old bitter controversy aroused by the writings of Malthus.

The opposition to be harmonized is not between population and the means of subsistence, but rather between population and productive power. Productive power depends upon the intelligence of man and the efficiency of the social organization ; and as this productive power increases, the food supply increases. Productive power thus determines the quantity of food that a nation can obtain, and this quantity of food stands in no necessary and unalterable relation to the total possible food supply which could be obtained by the greatest utilization of all natural resources.

Productive power is really the connecting link, the equalizing force, between population and the food supply ; it checks the former and increases the latter. As civilization is the principle antagonistic to the law of diminishing returns, so productive power is the principle antagonistic to the law of increasing population. With the growth of those qualities in men which lead to an increase in the productive power, there is a diminution of the force of those passions which tend to increase population, thus gradually bringing about a harmony between population and food supply. In the primitive man the cruder appetites and passions are the strongest motives to action.



With the development of a higher type of man other pleasures become stronger and the natural impulses which come from the primitive appetites and passions are gradually subdued. A new society thus becomes possible, in which individuals act in a way that tends to secure a closer connection between population and productive power.

The value of food to a poor man, after his own wants have been satisfied up to a certain point, decreases so rapidly that the value of those increments of food necessary to the proper nourishment of his family is less to him than the value of other elements in his own consumption. He neglects his family to supply these personal wants. If the father's productive power is small, in order to satisfy his urgent wants he places his family in such conditions that they necessarily suffer, and as a result population is kept down. On account of a lack of productive power through which a larger income might be obtained, the father is often compelled to select a house in an unhealthy region, to provide his children with insufficient clothing and to deprive them of many of those conditions which go to make up a healthy life. Give such a man a greater productive power, and he will place his family under better conditions, where the effect of bad air, impure water and other detrimental causes will be less harmful than before, and as a result the number of surviving children in his family will be greater.

An increase in productive power does not increase the number of children born into a family, but it does increase the number of children that can survive in a family and reach maturity; and it is only through some change in the productive power which enables the members of a community to place themselves in a different and better environment, that an increase in population is rendered possible. In a primitive society population does not increase, or at least increases but slowly, and this fact is due to the choice of surroundings which men make. The bad physical conditions surrounding a family are the results of its limited productive power. Lack of productive power forces the family to put itself under these conditions

in order to satisfy its more pressing wants. The lack of productive power, therefore, and not deficiency in the food supply, is the cause of misery and vice. This may be illustrated by the case of early Philadelphia. In the first quarter of the present century population was more congested in particular localities than it now is, not because there was not ample food in and about the city, but because men of limited productive capacities placed themselves under such conditions that misery and vice were the necessary consequences. With the gradual increase in productive power in the city during this century there has been a rapid improvement in the condition of the average citizen, and as a result the greater population suffers less proportionally than did the smaller population at an earlier period, and misery and vice are reduced.

With a low productive power selfishness and the desire to satisfy immediate wants force the family almost necessarily into misery and vice. Even though the food were produced chemically at its present cost, so that the results of the law of diminishing returns could be avoided, the same causes would lead to misery and vice and check the increase in population. With a given productive power the people in a given region will act in a way that will lead to a certain amount of misery and crime. It may be true that only a few miles distant there are other conditions, permitting an increase in population which has no detrimental social effects, yet along with the choices which people are making with reference to their productive power, similar choices are being made in consumption, and the same vice and misery will prevail.

The new statement of the law depends, then, upon the opposition between different elements in man's nature, and not upon the opposition between man and external nature; and also upon the fact that an increase in productive power is due to subjective changes in man and not to objective changes in man's environment. The nature of man is gradually changing and new pleasures and powers are being developed, while accompanying these changes there is a constant increase in the productive power of individuals. With this influx of new qualities

there is an efflux of the old, and as a consequence there is possible a constant increase in population, accompanied by a constant diminution in the rate of increase. From this we arrive at the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that the tendency to over-populate leads, not to over-population, but to under-population. The truth of this paradox may be illustrated by means of the following table :

TABLE I.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
	Industrial Qualities.	Children Born in each Family.	Relative Quantity of Food produced.	Number of Children surviving in each Family.	Misery caused by Over-population.	Total Population.
A	1	8	3	$2\frac{1}{5}$	$x$	3 M.
B	2	7	5	$2\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{2x}{3}$	5 M.
C	3	6	9	$2\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{x}{2}$	9 M.
D	4	5	15	$2\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{x}{3}$	15 M.

Let A, B, C and D represent four successive stages in the development of a society. In each stage there is an increase in the industrial qualities of the individuals in the society and a corresponding increase in their productive power. Stage A represents the primitive condition of this society, where its members have only one industrial quality, while later, in stage B they have two, in C three, and finally in D they have four industrial qualities. In stage A, where the industrial qualities are the most limited, the tendency to increase population will be greatest. The pleasures of the people will be few and inharmonious, while their appetites and passions will be little restrained by social and economic forces. In this stage there will be born (say) eight children to a family, in B seven children, in C six children and in D only five children. Every stage in the advancing civilization, accompanied by an increase in the number of industrial qualities, will open up new sources of pleasure and create new social forces through which the

strength of the primitive appetites and passions will be reduced. A new equilibrium will thus be formed between the primitive and the social elements in man's nature, and there will be a decrease in the tendency to increase population.

With each increase in the number of industrial qualities the power of the society to produce food will be augmented. We will assume that the relative increase of the food supply is indicated in the third column. On the same area three families can be supported in stage A, five families in stage B, nine families in stage C, and fifteen families in stage D. There will therefore be a fixed limit to the increase of population in each of these stages of progress corresponding to the productive power in that stage. When this fixed limit is reached, misery, disease, famine or other forms of social distress must carry off the redundant individuals and keep the population stationary in amount, until some new increase of productive power extends the possible limit of population.

The fourth column indicates the number of each family that survive until maturity and thus become the parents of a new generation. If the amount of the food supply is stationary, only two children can survive in the average family. The more dynamic the society and the more rapid the increase in the number of its industrial qualities, the more quickly can it advance towards the ideal state and the larger is the number that can survive in each family. In stage A, although eight children are born in each family, yet the society is so static that but two and one-fifth children on an average can survive. In stage B, because of greater intelligence and of a more rapid increase in the food supply, a larger number can survive in each family, say two and one-fourth children; in stage C, under still better conditions, perhaps two and one-third children survive; and finally in stage D the number of surviving children may reach two and one-half to the family. In short the actual increase in numbers will be greater in each succeeding stage, although the number of children born to a family will be less.

The pressure of over-population is measured by the difference

between the number born to a family and the number surviving. In stage A, where eight children are born to a family and but two and one-fifth children can survive, the pressure of population against its limits must be great enough to sweep off five and four-fifths children in each family, while in stage D the pressure is so reduced that a half of the children can survive. The standard of life can therefore be increased in each succeeding stage and the distribution of wealth will be more equitable.

The fifth column seeks to represent the misery which the tendency to over-populate creates in each stage of progress. If the misery and suffering of the average person due to this cause in stage A is represented by  $x$ , this average misery will be less in stage B, say two-thirds of  $x$ . In stage C it will be still less, say one-half of  $x$ , while in stage D it may fall to one-third of  $x$ . The detrimental influences of over-population are gradually reduced by social progress, and if there is great distress in an advanced society, it must be due largely to other causes.

The sixth column shows what will be the total population that can be maintained by the productive power during each of these stages of social progress. If stage A, with its limited productive power, can support three million people in the region occupied by the society, in stage B five million can be supported; while in stage C the number can be increased to nine million and in stage D to fifteen million. The social improvement in each succeeding stage is due on the one hand to the more perfect industrial organization which a larger population permits, and on the other to the reduced pressure of population.

Taking up the theoretical conditions which entered into Malthus's first discussion with Godwin, we might suppose that an ideal society having its industrial qualities fully developed could support sixty million people in a given region. The actual population, however, would stand in no necessary relation to this ideal number, and no calculation based upon the population which this ideal society could support would have any bearing on the actual population in any given stage of

progress, or enable one to determine the limit to the amount of population which a society with a given productive power could support. Knowledge of such ideal conditions would be of no aid in determining the welfare of the society at any given stage, or the social distress which the tendency to over-populate creates.

No valid proof of the law of population can be based upon the relation between the primitive tendency of a society to over-populate and the purely physical conditions of the environment; nor are those arguments any better which seek to determine the pressure of population by the relation between the actual numbers in a given society and the ideal productivity of the soil when cultivated by an ideal society. The only sound arguments are those which connect the productive power of each society with its present tendency to increase in numbers. Through this comparison it will be seen that the pressure of population is greatest in the earlier stages of progress and that it is gradually reduced as society progresses. So long as a society continues dynamic, the less the tendency to increase population the more rapid can the growth of population be, and the greater the total population which a given region can support. Over-population is therefore relative and has its cause in social, not in physical conditions.

Viewing the problem of population from its social side, the checks to the increase of population must be arranged on some other plan than that proposed by Malthus. He recognized only the conscious restraints which act through individuals, and did not bring out the unconscious restraints which are operating all the while through social agencies. We see the vice and misery around us and feel within us the restraining influence of moral motives. They are indications that the natural inclinations of the individual are out of harmony with his environment. The vice and misery existing show that the will and reasoning powers of the average man are relatively weak in their struggle against the passions and appetites which he inherits from his primitive forefathers, while the need of moral restraints, even when these are most efficient, shows that

the surplus of pleasure over pain is still on the wrong side. Moral restraints in social affairs would not be needed if the pleasures which the environment yields to right actions exceeded the pleasure to be derived from actions out of harmony with the economic conditions of a given period.

The function of moral restraint is to give increased vitality to social ideals and thus to reduce the surplus of actions prompted by lower motives. It is at present strong enough to bring the actions of the higher types of men into harmony with these ideals; but the continued presence of misery, vice and other positive checks to population shows how incapable it is, when unsupported by the proper economic conditions, to reduce the surplus of pleasure derived by primitive men from wrong conduct below that given by right actions, more in accord with the social environment.

Fortunately our social progress does not depend upon these conscious checks to population. Even when we have no thought of limiting population, unconscious checks are developing in every dynamic society which in a natural way bring the actions of individuals into harmony with the welfare of society. Of these unconscious checks the economic causes raising the standard of life are most effective. For as the number of pleasures forming a part of this standard increases, the inclination to indulge in any one of them decreases. New complements of goods are also formed in a dynamic society with every increase of productive power and with every reduction of the appetites. These causes are aided by changes in our imputation of utility, by which we attribute less of the joint pleasure derived from a complement of goods to the older and cruder elements of the complement, and more to the newer elements. This, too, prevents disagreeable associations and increases those of an agreeable nature. The added pleasure which these new adjustments give to actions in harmony with the social environment makes it more natural and easy for individuals to do what is right, and thus lessens the need of conscious checks to population, whether in the form of vice and misery or of moral restraint. The causes which increase the

productive power of society also increase unconscious economic checks to population. Productive power depends mainly upon subjective conditions and every increase therein is the result of new mental powers, which modify the nature of man through the conflict between them and the primitive passions and appetites. Prudence and self-restraint are developed by the same conditions that increase the food supply. Productive power is therefore the equalizing force between population and the food supply. Whatever increases the latter must act as an unconscious check to the former.

The other powerful checks to population are sociological and physiological. These act unconsciously and with increasing force in each succeeding stage of a progressive society. Among the sociological checks, I include all those causes in society which keep men from feeling the force of their passions and appetites. Society throws around its members such restraints that they rarely become fully conscious of the strength of the passions within them; and only as they come under peculiar conditions where the normal restraints of society are not operative are they placed in an environment where they feel the full force which these passions can exert. In a progressive society the associations that arouse these passions decrease in number and disagreeable associations are more easily awakened which reduce their power and limit their activity.

The growth of these sociological checks is retarded by the freedom possessed by persons of a low moral tone to parade their vicious tendencies in public places and to corrupt public morals by creating improper associations. We try to guard virtue by putting it within walls, when the proper course would be to exclude from society the vicious element and enclose it within bounds, so that the innocent can enjoy public places without contaminating influences. The current of our thoughts would be purer if society became more homogeneous through the exclusion of the rougher element now at large. If society frees itself from the influence of these persons, it will be possible to root out many old habits and associations through which the passions are aroused. New habits and instincts would



prove safeguards against the bursts of passion which improper associations produce. In our social life we might become unconscious of our passions through the lack of associations to arouse them.

The artificial restraints separating men and women have much to do with the corrupt thoughts aroused by the presence of the opposite sex. Where convent life is an ideal for young women, the associations created by the presence of women relate to unbridled indulgence. Under these conditions a feeling of honor may protect a select few within given social circles, but isolated unprotected women are thought of as impure or as legitimate prey. Where, however, constant contact between the sexes is possible, a multitude of pleasant acts and events form the prominent features of social life and force into the background the morbid thoughts of isolated persons. Individually these new pleasures may not be so intense, but they form a harmonious complement of far greater power than the cruder pleasures they displace. A feeling of honor restrains men even in the presence of unprotected women, and the thought of taking undue liberties becomes repugnant to the finer feelings which the new relations create. These social feelings and pleasures greatly lessen the need of conscious checks to population and tend to create an equilibrium between it and the food supply.

The physiological checks are due to those physiological changes in men which reduce the strength of the primitive appetites and passions. Carey and Herbert Spencer have fully discussed the character of these changes and each has developed a theory to explain their origin. The mere fact, however, that there are such reductions of the passions and appetites is sufficient in this connection.

There are, then, three classes of unconscious checks which supplement those mentioned by Malthus. With each succeeding step in social progress their effects accumulate and make it much more easy and natural for the members of a higher civilization to do those acts which harmonize with the conditions of progress. First, the economic checks strengthen those

mental qualities which aid production, and favor changes in consumption which add to the pleasure of those forms of consumption that increase the welfare of society. Then, through the action of society, sociological checks are thrown around the members of a progressive society which make them less conscious of the passions within them. And finally, the physiological checks begin to operate through which the passions themselves are reduced and lose the power that they once had in determining the choices of individuals. In these ways, through the growth of economic, sociological and physiological checks to population, society is gradually getting itself into a better condition, where there is a greater harmony between the different sides of human nature. The opposition between the productive power of society and its rate of increase is lessened, while vice and misery cease to be a necessary consequence of social progress.

From the foregoing it can be seen that Malthusianism is not a term with a definite meaning. Under this head several important social doctrines have been discussed. The lines separating them from one another have been but dimly seen, and much confusion has resulted because the contending parties have not been fully conscious of what they desired to defend or to refute. The original dispute lay in the domain of theoretical politics about the possibility of an ideal state. The second was a practical contest relating to the causes of misery and vice. The first contest was between Malthus and the political reformers; the second between him and the moral and social reformers of his time. These moral reformers had no interest in an ideal society. Being religious in tone, they looked forward to a religious millennium in heaven and not to an ideal political society on earth. They were, however, firm believers in the perfection and harmony of natural law. They could not, therefore, accept a doctrine which implied an opposition between the natural tendencies of man and those of external nature, and made vice and misery the result of natural instead of moral causes.

In addition to these doctrines about human ideals, the Mal-

thusian controversy brought to light two very important doctrines about the benefits and evils of the tendency of population to increase. At first the discussion centred on the question whether or not the tendency to over-populate was an evil while so much of the earth was unoccupied; but finally the question arose, whether or not the tendency to over-populate leads to social progress by favoring the survival of the fittest. By the time this final proposition was fairly before the public the basis of the discussion was shifted from economic to biologic grounds. Malthusianism became Darwinism, and the economists were freed from any need of discussing the law of population as a special problem of their own science.

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